Getting from the Edmonton International Airport (YEG) to QFS 2019

Note that the airport is outside the city, some distance from downtown Edmonton and the University of Alberta (where QFS 2019 will be held). There is no direct train or subway line to the airport.

Most QFS participants will be staying in either the Lister Centre on the University campus, or in hotels near the University or in downtown Edmonton.

The QFS 2019 website has a link (http://flyeia.com/coming-and-going) with details about airport transportation options, but we have summarized the most relevant information for QFS 2019 participants below.

**Least expensive option:**

Edmonton’s public transit system (ETS) operates a bus (number “747”) from the airport to the Century Park Station of its light rail transit (LRT) system. You can catch this bus outside Door 8 on the Arrivals Level of the Terminal Building. It runs every 30 or 60 minutes, depending on the time of day, and the trip takes about 25 minutes. The fare is $5 one way, and is payable on the bus, in cash (ATM machines and currency exchange are available in the airport if you don’t yet have Canadian dollars).

To get to the University or to nearby hotels from the Century Park LRT Station where the 747 bus drops you off, you will need to purchase an ETS ticket from a machine at the station ($3.50, cash again). Don’t buy multiple tickets or a pass, since all QFS participants and accompanying persons will receive an ETS pass in their registration package that can be used for the rest of the conference. You will need to validate your ticket in one of the orange machines before boarding the LRT.

Century Park is the end of the LRT line, so all trains are going the same direction and will take you to the University and/or downtown Edmonton. Trains run about every 5 to 10 minutes, depending on time of day.

If you are staying at Lister Centre, the closest LRT stop is Health Sciences/Jubilee Station (a 5 minute walk from Lister Centre). If you are going directly to the QFS welcome reception at the Students Union Building (SUB) or to the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Sciences (CCIS) where the QFS talks will be held, get off at the next stop, the University Station (5 minutes from SUB or CCIS). The University Station is also the closest stop to the Campus Towers Suite Hotel (5 minutes). The LRT ride from Century Park is about 15 minutes to the University campus.

If you are going to one of the hotels in downtown Edmonton, remain on the LRT for a few more minutes. After the University Station, the LRT will cross the river and you can get off at Corona Station (e.g. for the Matrix Hotel), at Bay Station (for Crash Hotel, Coast Edmonton Plaza, Comfort Inn, Holiday Inn Express), at Central Station (Fairmont Hotel Macdonald, Courtyard by Marriott, Westin, Union Bank, Chateau Lacombe) or at Churchill Station (Sutton Place). These hotels are all within a 5 minute walk of a LRT station.

**Fastest/most convenient option:**

Take a taxi or Uber from the airport directly to your destination. Taxis are available outside the arrival level. The fare should be $55 to downtown (cash or credit card) or a bit cheaper to get to the University. For Uber, you will need a phone or device with the Uber App. The Uber pickup area is outside Door 10 next to the ride share banner. Uber is convenient and a bit cheaper than a taxi ($40 to $50 to downtown; $38 to $48 from YEG to campus) but sometimes you have to wait a bit for a ride.

**Other options:**

Edmonton Skyshuttle operates a shared shuttle from the airport to various dropoff locations. These include Lister Centre, the south end of HUB Mall on the University campus (close to the QFS venues and to Campus Tower Suite Hotel) as well as the recommended QFS hotels. For a single person, this option is cheaper than a taxi ($18 one way, $30 round trip) but is usually a bit slower (because of the multiple dropoff stops). You may have to wait a while for the shuttle (unfortunately the current schedule was not available on the airport website when this was written).

Cars can be rented at the airport, but are probably not a practical/economical alternative unless you have travel plans that require a car during the conference.
If you are planning a trip outside Edmonton, e.g. to Banff or Jasper, before or after QFS, renting a car is a good alternative to public transit outside Edmonton, if you are comfortable driving in Canada. You might find it cheaper to book a car to be picked up in central Edmonton rather than at YEG.

**Getting around Edmonton during QFS 2019**

The central areas of Edmonton (including the University area and the city center) are laid out in a grid system, making it easy to find your way around. In these areas almost all streets and avenues are numbered (rather than having names). In Edmonton, “streets” run north/south and “avenues” run east/west.

The historical center of Edmonton (in the current downtown) is at the intersection of 100th Street and 100th Avenue. Street numbers increase (decrease) as you go west (east) from this location. Avenue numbers increase (decrease) as you go north (south) from this location. The University of Alberta is south and west from downtown so, for example, Lister Centre on the south edge of the University campus is at the intersection of 116 Street and 87 Avenue (its address is 11613 87 Avenue). Finding your way from Lister Centre to downtown would be a simple matter of following Edmonton’s cartesian coordinate system: 13 blocks north with avenue numbers increasing, and 16 blocks east with street numbers decreasing. The only complication is the North Saskatchewan River, which separates Edmonton’s north side (where downtown is located) from its south side (where the University of Alberta is). This is a significant geographic barrier (and swimming across the river is not recommended) so you would need to find a bridge. In this case, it would be the High Level Bridge, which connects the University and downtown along 109th Street.

You will receive an Edmonton Transit System (ETS) pass when you pick up your QFS registration package. This pass is valid for the duration of QFS (from August 8 through 13) and entitles you to ride all ETS buses and the light rail transit (LRT). The LRT runs until about 1:00 am, with service every 5 minutes or so during the day, less frequently on evenings and weekends, and is the most convenient way to get from the University to downtown, including many hotels and the conference banquet venue (the Royal Alberta Museum). It runs underground in the University area and downtown, and is above ground outside central Edmonton. There is an underground LRT station (University Station) on campus, which is the closest LRT stop to the Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Science (“CCIS”, the QFS meeting venue), the Students’ Union Building (“SUB”, the location of the QFS opening reception) and Campus Towers Suite Hotel. It is also close to Lister Centre where many QFS participants are staying. There is an above-ground LRT stop (Health Sciences/Jubilee Station) slightly closer to Lister Centre.

Edmonton’s LRT lines do have names ("Metro Line" and “Capital Line”), but there is really only a single LRT line in the parts of Edmonton you are likely to visit (the city center and the University/south side), so you shouldn’t have to worry about which line to take (and most locals don’t even know the names of the lines). The direction of travel on the LRT is indicated by the name of the end station. If you are going south from the University, the signs and trains will say “Health Sciences/Jubilee” or “Century Park” (the last station on the south side of Edmonton where you would change to/from the ETS “747” airport bus). If you are going north from the University, e.g. to downtown, the signs will say “Clareview” or “Kingsway/Royal Alex”. Both destinations follow the same route until you reach the last downtown stop (Churchill Station) but then they separate into two separate lines. If for some reason you need to take the LRT to a location north of downtown, you should make sure that you catch the correct northbound train. If you are just going to downtown, e.g. to attend the conference banquet at RAM, any northbound train will take you to all the downtown stops, including the Churchill Station connected to RAM by an underground passage.

To reach locations other than downtown, your LRT pass is valid for all ETS buses (except for the 747 airport bus which has an additional $5 charge). The University transit center, where you would catch a bus, is located in the central campus, beside the University LRT station, on 87 Avenue at 112 Street. There is good bus service to Whyte Avenue (where some of the QFS hotels and many bars and restaurants are located). If you want to get to a more distant location in Edmonton, you should probably use the ETS website to plan your trip, particularly later in the evening when buses run less frequently: