

**SubTeam:** Operations    **Level:** Intermediate

**Time Required:** 90 minutes

**Title: Fundraising and Sponsor Relations**

**Learning Objectives:** Understand...

1. *The four key steps to generate funds and maintain sponsorships*

***It is assumed that the student has the following background understanding.***

- Operations Basics. Please review the Basic training first.

**Reference Material:**

<https://www.firstinspires.org/resource-library/fundraising-toolkit>

**Instructions: Read each section and follow relevant links to content and videos.**

Fundraising is an important part of the Operations function. Our operating budget is a minimum of \$40,000 annually. In the 2017-2018 year we need to raise \$16,000 or more. The FIRST website has an excellent toolkit for fundraising. See link in Reference section of this document.

Follow the four steps below to plan and manage sponsorships.

Step One: Conduct Opportunity Analysis

Step Two: Develop Fundraising Plan

Step Three: Make "The Ask"

Step Four: Manage Sponsor Relations

### **Step One: Conduct Opportunity Analysis**

An Opportunity Analysis will help the team gain a better understanding of the community and will help to identify the grant and sponsorship opportunities available. Leveraging the social networks on the team is critical to gaining support. One activity that FIRST recommends is resource mapping. Resource mapping is a brainstorming tool that allows you to identify potential resources in your network. This tool is based on a theory called six degrees of separation, which is the idea that anyone on the planet can be connected to another person through a chain of acquisitions in six associations or less. LinkedIn and Facebook are also based on this concept and social networking is a very powerful tool for fundraising.

**Watch** the video to learn how to use [Resource Mapping](#)

**Read:** FIRST also has resources to conduct what they call a [Community Analysis](#).

**Reflect:** What can our team do to conduct an Opportunity or Community Analysis?

### **Step Two: Develop Fundraising Plan**

Once you have done the Community Analysis you should develop a Fundraising Plan. The purpose of the plan is to document specific tasks that the team will take to ask potential sponsors for support and actions that promote the team within the community.

### **Step Three: Make “The Ask”**

The best way to recruit sponsors and supporters is to ask them. A personal request is always much more effective.

**Watch** the video to learn how to make [The Ask](#)

Some additional tips for making the ask include:

#### **Know Your Audience**

- First and foremost, before making any ask (and particularly a major ask), know your prospect. What is his or her background? How were they introduced to your organization? What other organizations do they support? What is their general financial situation?
- Research your prospects well, and elicit information as part of the cultivation process. The better you know your prospect, the better your chances are of moving them towards a gift.

#### **Connect Your Ask with Your Prospect’s Interests**

- As you research your prospect, try to figure out what his or her key interests are, and how you might align those interests with the needs of your organization. Donors generally have a couple of key charitable interests, and it is up to you to try to connect your donor’s interests with your non-profit’s mission and needs.

#### **Know What You are Asking For**

- Before you make an ask, know what you are asking for. Be specific, know how much you are asking for, and how it will be used.

### **Practice**

- Practicing (not memorizing... practicing) helps you feel more confident in your approach. Because each donor is different, each ask is different. Spend 5 minutes rehearsing with a partner and write yourself a script.

### **Keep it High Energy**

- When making an ask, keep your conversation high energy. Be excited about your mission. Talk passionately about what a difference this gift will make. Tell stories and be an enthusiastic advocate for your team.

### **Quantify Results**

- Donors like to get invested in causes bigger than themselves... we all do. Make sure you show your prospects the big picture of what your team is trying to do. Cast a big... huge... amazing vision about what you are trying to accomplish and why. Quantify your results, explain what you can do with this gift, and make your prospect see how they can make an impact. Also share a summary of past successes and results.

## **Step Four: Manage Sponsor Relations**

**Watch** the video to learn more about [Sponsor Relations](#)

Team 2537 offers different sponsorship levels to incentivize sponsors to donate to the team. Please reference the [Sponsorship Levels](#)

The team must deliver on these promises and engage the relationship with the sponsor throughout the year.

Once a sponsor has donated money these are the process steps that should be followed:

1. The Boosters President records the donation amount and date in a shared Excel file. A sponsorship is active for one year from the date of the deposit.
2. The Operations Team Mentor sends an email confirming the donation and thanking the sponsor. The student lead can also be introduced at this time.
3. The Operations Team references the spreadsheet and ensures the appropriate incentives are applied. Reference the second tab on the [Sponsor Tracking](#) spreadsheet where follow up activities should be tracked.
4. Sponsors should be recognized on the website, social media, in videos, on t-shirts, banners, and at events. The Operations Team needs to make sure logos are posted and active sponsors are recognized. The Operations Team should coordinate with other students to ensure the robot has space to display sponsor logos.
5. The Operations Team should keep in contact with the sponsor throughout the year by providing an update after each key activity or competition.
6. Keep the lines of communication open, provide frequent updates and look for opportunities to say thank you.