

Proposal: WordCamp Education Sponsor Fund

Background

This post proposes a combined Education Sponsorship Fund for WP Credits and WordPress Campus Connect (WPCC) students, added as a standard package to the Call for Sponsors for every flagship WordCamp (WordCamp Asia, WordCamp Europe, WordCamp US).

Two prior efforts already did a version of this, independently of each other and without a shared fund or process:

- **WordCamp US 2025:** two WPCC students attended the event, including inaugural scholarship recipient Andrés Parra, sponsored by WordPress.com ([The Repository](#)). This was the first time WPCC students reached a flagship WordCamp.
- **WordCamp Europe 2026:** five WP Credits students were fully sponsored (travel, hotel, tickets, and Contributor Day) by Automattic, Elementor, Hostinger, and WPBakery, through the [WordPress.org Education Student Sponsorship](#). Sponsors were listed on the WCEU sponsor page and a venue banner. In a [follow-up impact report](#), sponsored students rated the experience 8 to 10 out of 10.

Both were organized ad hoc, per event, without a published recommendation form, selection criteria, or funding structure. This proposal formalizes that work into one repeatable fund covering both programs.

It follows a discussion in the WP Credits team huddle on August 26, 2026, where combining the two programs' scholarship efforts into a single fund was raised as a next step.

The Proposal

We propose an Education Sponsorship Fund that:

- **Combines WP Credits and WPCC:** into a single fund, rather than running two separate sponsorship efforts.
- **Covers a baseline cohort:** of students at each flagship WordCamp: travel, accommodation, and event ticket.
- **Is part of the standard Call for Sponsors:** for each flagship event, not a separate fundraising campaign or outreach process.

- **Uses a published recommendation form and selection criteria:** rather than being organized ad hoc per event.
- **Gives every contributing sponsor the same recognition:** regardless of contribution size (see Recognition).

Sourcing

Students are nominated, not self-applied. A recommendation form, filled out by WPCC organizers, WP Credits mentors, or institution faculty members is how a nomination enters the fund. The form asks for:

- **Contribution summary:** what the student has contributed, taught, or built, and over what period.
- **Portfolio link:** a link to their WordPress.org profile and/or personal WordPress site.
- **Why this student:** in the mentor's or organizer's own words, why this student stands out.
- **The opportunity:** what attending would mean for the student's trajectory in the community.
- **Age and chaperone needs:** whether the student is under 18, or otherwise needs a chaperone or guardian to travel, so logistics and consent requirements can be planned ahead of the event.
- **Financial need (optional):** an optional, sensitively handled note if cost is the barrier to attending.

This mirrors how WPCC already manages attendee lists, through the organizer relationship rather than an open, public application.

The form opens on a rolling basis and closes at least three months before each flagship event, matching the timeline in the existing [Campus Connect Flagship WordCamp Scholarship Guidelines](#).

Selection Criteria

Nominations are evaluated primarily on two criteria:

- **Contribution track record:** sustained engagement, not a single event: consistent contribution to a Make team, WPCC workshops attended, hackathon participation, or ongoing mentorship of other students.
- **WordPress portfolio site excellence:** the quality of the student's published WordPress.org profile or personal WordPress site, as a measure of applied learning.

A small review committee, education program managers plus a rotating mentor or organizer seat, reviews nominations against these criteria and weighs diversity of region, program, and contribution track (code, design, docs, support, marketing) across the cohort.

Selected students are notified directly and must formally accept within two weeks. Recipients are also required to write a blog post about their experience after the event, and will agree to doing so as part of accepting the sponsorship.

Cohort Size

The baseline cohort per flagship WordCamp is 3 WPCC students and 5 WP Credits students (8 total):

Program	Baseline cohort	Basis
WordPress Campus Connect (WPCC)	3 students	Grows the WordCamp US 2025 cohort of 2 students.
WP Credits	5 students	Matches the WordCamp Europe 2026 cohort of 5 students.
Total baseline	8 students	See Funding for how additional funds are used.

This is a baseline, not a ceiling. If a fund raises more than the \$24,000 needed to cover these 8 scholarships, the review committee may add students in roughly the same 3:5 ratio; otherwise, additional funds go toward that event's education activities (see Funding).

Funding

The fund goal is \$30,000 per flagship WordCamp: \$24,000 for the 8-student baseline cohort, plus a \$6,000 reserve for printed education materials and on-site education activities. The minimum contribution is \$3,000. Sponsors can contribute at any level above that, and multiple sponsors can combine toward the same fund; there is no maximum.

Contribution	Funds
\$3,000 (minimum)	1 full scholarship: flight, hotel, and event ticket for 1 student.
\$6,000	2 full scholarships.
\$9,000	3 full scholarships.

\$15,000	5 full scholarships.
\$24,000	The full 8-student baseline cohort (3 WPCC + 5 WP Credits).
\$30,000 (fund target)	The full baseline cohort, plus a \$6,000 reserve for printed education materials and on-site education activities (Contributor Day table supplies, activity kits, signage).

There are no leftover funds. Any contribution beyond the \$30,000 target goes directly toward that same WordCamp's education activities and experiences (additional workshops, activity kits, expanded Contributor Day support, or, at the review committee's discretion, additional scholarships) rather than being banked or carried forward to the next event.

Recognition

Every contributing sponsor receives the same recognition, regardless of contribution size:

Recognition	Details
Monthly Education Buzz Report shout-out	Named as a fund contributor in the monthly report published on make.wordpress.org/community .
Site logo placement	Logo on the flagship event's education/sponsorship page.
Printed materials	Logo on education program printed materials distributed at the event (handouts, signage, program guides).
Community table presence	Logo/branding at the education table on Contributor Day, and the event's Community table in the sponsor hall.
Mention in student blog	Sponsorship recipients will mention the sponsor in their required recap posts.

Next Steps

- **Build the recommendation form:** including the age and chaperone flag described in Sourcing.
- **Update the handbook and Call for Sponsors templates:** merge the existing [Campus Connect Flagship WordCamp Scholarship Guidelines](#) with the scholarship option already listed in the [WP Credits sponsor guide](#) into one combined Education

Sponsorship Fund page, and add it as a standard line item to each flagship's Call for Sponsors template.

- **Staff the review committee:** confirm rotating mentor and organizer seats for the next cycle.
- **Brief flagship organizing teams:** so the fund is included from the start of Call for Sponsors planning, not added on later.

Open Questions

- **Portfolio review rubric:** a lightweight rubric for judging “portfolio excellence” consistently across reviewers.
- **Funds handling:** how sponsorship funds for a combined WP Credits and WPCC fund should be received and disbursed, including how the education-activities reserve is spent and tracked.
- **Chaperone and consent logistics:** what additional consent, insurance, or Foundation policy applies when a selected student is a minor or otherwise needs a chaperone.

Feedback from WPCC organizers and WP Credits mentors on this proposal is welcome before it moves forward.