

## Introduction

*Welcome to Caltech's 2023-2024 Student Organization Guide - Corporate Funding/Sponsorships!*

This resource is for club leaders to reference when seeking corporate sponsorship from employers and organizations. Caltech clubs are typically sponsored by different on-campus resources, including:

- Associated Students of California Institute of Technology ASCIT
- Graduate Student Council (GSC)
- Moore-Hufstedler Fund, the Housner Fund, the Student Investment Fund
- Office of Residential Experience (ORE)
- Caltech Center for Inclusion and Diversity (CCID)
- Professors and/or labs
- Academic Divisions and departments

## Connecting with Companies/ Organizations for Club Sponsorships and Gifts

LDR: Your first step is to send an email to [career@caltech.edu](mailto:career@caltech.edu) asking for help from the CALE employer relations team. This step is required prior to reaching out to any corporate sponsors or outside-Caltech organizations. CALE is here to help you avoid getting your club into a pickle!

### Overview and process

After exhausting other internal avenues for funding, corporate sponsorships or funding from non-profits may be an option your club would like to pursue. **Prior to reaching out to any company/organization**, contact CALE's employer relations team who will help you through the process. You can write to [career@caltech.edu](mailto:career@caltech.edu) or stop by CALE during normal opening hours.

It's important to **start the process early, ideally several months in advance** of your event or activity. CALE's employer relations team can help you identify a fundraising strategy, put you in touch with *responsible, vetted* employers and companies, and work with you to determine which industries to reach out to, relevant alumni to connect with, and which companies have active, working relationships with Caltech.

When considering requesting sponsorships from companies and other organizations, it helps to have the following information:

- Description of program/event
- Learning outcomes and goals of the program/event
- How the program/event aligns with the company/organization
- Number of students that will benefit from the sponsorship

If you have a draft of that information ready, CALE will be able to assist you quicker. If not, that's where we will start.

The next steps will depend upon many factors including:

- the amount of funding you are seeking
- the goals of your club
- historical relationship between the club and potential funding organizations
- involvement of the club advisor
- external factors such the health of the economy (it's much harder to fundraise during a recession)
- demographics and size of your club

These steps may include:

- developing a sponsorship prospectus with various levels
- writing a one-pager about your club and/or event
- researching companies and alums
- drafting outreach emails
- developing a back-up plan for the funds should the original plan fall through due to factors outside the club/ Caltech's control. The legal term for this is force majeure, and it happens more often than you'd think
- looping in other campus offices such as the CCID

**There is not a one-size-fits-all fundraising strategy, thus communication with CALE is the necessary first step.**

## Overhead

The Institute takes 20% of all funds coming in as a donation or grant. This is known as overhead and it goes towards things like TP and utilities like heat and internet. Most schools take 35-60%. The Institute (Provost) has classified corporate funds going to student clubs as donations and thus overhead is taken off. When budgeting, you need to include this into your calculations. As of now

## Corporate grants

Caltech maintains strategic relationships with a number of companies who, as a part of their relationship with Caltech, contribute to student clubs through corporate grant programs. In order to make these opportunities more readily available, CALE will issue a Call for Proposals (CfP) about once per year, open to all student clubs. CALE and OTTCP, the office that manages strategic corporate partnerships for the Institute, will then present these options to Caltech's corporate partners and notify student clubs of their selections.

The CfP and selection process will be designed in order to align with the various corporate grant processes, and will typically occur during late Winter Term/ early Spring Term for funding the following academic year. As Caltech does not control the grant processes of our external partners, the internal process may change from year to year. Another reason to get in touch with CALE early!

## FAQ's

**Why do we need to talk to CALE? Why can't we just start reaching out to companies and alumni?** There are a number of complexities involved with raising funds from external-to-Caltech organizations such as a company or alumni. It is not as simple as a group of friends throwing in on a pizza.

Some of these complexities stem from the fact that the government regulates financial transactions including the exchange of money and/or goods between a company and Caltech. *These financial transactions, including gifts and sponsorships,* are governed by various laws and regulations at the city, county, state, and federal levels. Caltech student clubs are part of Caltech, the Institute, which is located within the City of Pasadena, Los Angeles County, and State of California, all of which are in the United States of America, all of which have laws and regulations which change. Caltech's internal processes and protocols for processing and tracking funds also change in order to maintain compliance. Navigating through the myriad of rules and regulations is a tedious process. CALE, which processes hundreds of thousands of dollars from companies annually, is here to smooth this process for you, so you can focus on your events, activities, and relationships, not the current process for accepting wire transfers from an out of state company.

Additional complexities are due to the more fuzzy arena generally referred to as *relationship management*. Caltech maintains relationships with hundreds of corporations, and it's important not to inundate any one relationship with many similar requests all within a short time frame. This confuses companies who want to

support student clubs but have limited bandwidth and resources. In the worst case, companies get overwhelmed and decide to just give up funding student clubs altogether. In other cases, companies are interested in interacting with student clubs but don't have anyone reaching out. CALE can help play matchmaker, increasing both your club, and all clubs' chances of getting funding.

**Our club has been relying on corporate fundraising for years, and we already know what to do. Do we still need to reach out to CALE?** If your student club has an established history of raising funds from outside companies, it may be enough to loop CALE in that you plan to repeat what the club did in prior years. It is still important to do this early on as processes/ protocols/ guidelines may have changed. Additionally, CALE is responsible for tracking most student-corporate engagement, and thus it's important to maintain contact throughout the process. It is helpful for CALE to know which companies are engaging with Caltech and how they are doing so. CALE also needs to be involved at the step where funding is actually transferred from the company or organization to Caltech. The funds will go through a number of different places on campus, and we are here to help make sure it doesn't get lost and arrives into your bursar account in a timely manner. When all goes well, the process takes four to six weeks. When there is a snag, it may take much longer.

**A company reached out to our club offering to collaborate. What do we do?** Reachout to CALE as soon as possible, ideally prior to responding to the company. Often these types of collaborations are of mutual benefit to both the student club and the company, however this is not always the case. In the past, in the worst cases, students have had very negative experiences, and more typically, smaller details have gone awry that could have been avoided by talking to someone with deep experience working with companies, like the CALE team.

**Can we highlight the fact that our club has a significant number of students from minoritized groups or identities?** Yes, in order to enhance the professional development of historically minoritized groups or identities, consider offering equity-based, targeted opportunities. If you are interested in exploring a collaboration with a company or organization related to equity-based offerings, CALE and the CCID will work together with you.