Cases/Conferences Funding Process

Policy & Process
The Penn State Smeal MBA Program is happy to support our students’ education, experience, and professional development and employment opportunities through the participation in MBA case competitions and conferences. While we would like to support many, we have limited funding and request that students plan accordingly, including dedicating a personal financial investment in all opportunities. The MBA Program will supply up to $1,000 total per team (not per participant) for selected case competitions and conferences. Requests will be evaluated on a rolling basis until funding is depleted.

Student Requests
Funding requests may be made by emailing amallison@psu.edu with the following information.

1. Case Competition/Conference Name
2. Date(s)
3. Location
4. Website
5. Participants’ names and years. Please include other competitions in which members have competed.
6. Description of why this will be valuable to the participants
7. Who will take photos
8. Who will blog
9. Cost breakdown – itemizing all costs for all participants culminating in a total requested.

Evaluation Criteria
Funding for student case competitions and conferences will be evaluated by a primary team involving the MBA managing and/or faculty director. Additional input may be sought from communications and other faculty, and/or staff depending on the event. Financial support will be based upon:

- Perceived value of the event to the students and to the MBA program, Smeal College, and Penn State.
- Opportunities for professional growth and/or employment.
- History and past quality of participation, or potential for new value
- Limiting students with repeated reimbursements to give others the opportunity to participate
Annual Budget
Total = $15,000 at $1,000 per case competition/conference, that supports 15 events.

Funding Specifics
The program will pay a specific amount or percentage of the estimated cost, determined on a case-by-case basis. This amount can be up to, but not necessarily $1,000 per team. Reimbursement will be processed upon submission of blogs and photos. The distribution and amount are entirely subject to the Program Office’s discretion.

Additional funding could be sought creatively – for example setting up a “Penn State Smeal MBA Case Competitors” LinkedIn Group, inviting alumni to coach and offer advice.

Coaches
Some cases may allow coaches – alumni or faculty. The key is that the work must be the students’ own. If a team requests a faculty or alumni advisor/coach, the team should understand that this is a voluntary faculty activity. It is not part of their normal responsibilities and many may not have time to offer extensive coaching to a case team.