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 attendance of 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 these opportunities.

The MBA Program will supply up to $1,000 total per approved team (not per participant) as a reimbursement for travel and lodging expenses 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
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 student services director, managing and/or faculty director and the communications faculty. Additional input will be sought from 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, supporting approximately 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. Travel and lodging expenses are eligible for reimbursement and receipts must be provided. Reimbursement will be processed upon submission of blogs and photos. The distribution of the amount are entirely subject to the Program Office’s discretion.

Additional funding could be sought creatively at the discretion of the case team.

**Coaches**
Some case competitions may allow coaches – alumni or faculty. 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.