External Funding Roundtable:

Tough problem
You have to knock on a lot of doors
You will get lots of ‘no’ responses, but don’t give up (perseverance)
Network

Conferences are a good place to connect with possible funders. They usually will have a vendors’ room full of companies, organizations and others for resources. Chat with them (tell them who you are and let them tell you who they are). After intros, tell them about your program – then they usually tend to ask ‘if there is something that we could do to help’ and that is your lead to say what you could use from them. Get their card and ask who you should contact to further talk about possible help.

Letters:

Send a letter to the contact explaining who you met with and where (to show connection and how the conference had an impact). Keep it short and straightforward.

Description of sample letter to potential funders:

• Intro of you, where you met the contact (conference & date) to show the connection trail
• Tell what you are seeking their assistance for
• What the program is (one sentence) and URL for additional information
• Contact information (including your phone, e-mail and times you will be in)
• Keep it basic – nothing flashy

Don’t just look up a name and send a request for funding – it has to be someone you can explain the connection to (people chain of how you found out about them).

Certain companies you cannot touch base with unless they contact you – if you don’t know what companies may be under this umbrella – go ahead and ask.

Students have more flexibility in rules than faculty/staff so go for it.

Tips:

- Play the diversity angle when asking for external funding
- One-on-one would be the 1st choice of asking and building relationships
- Don’t be specific in what you would use the funding for – point out things you could use the money for so you have more freedom in the use

- If they do support with funding, after you get the check – you could ask if they have any materials that they would like you to pass out to participants (swag).

**Swag:**

“1st go for money, if no, then go for swag” Swag is the term to use; most people know what you mean (loot, freebies, goodies, etc.).

**Where/how to find funding:**

- Conferences - vendor rooms (ex. ICE - Indiana Computer Educators)
- Community Contacts
- Alumni
- Networking
- Interns (have students ask who we should contact for funding – students don’t have as many political rules)
- Systers (mailing list for women involved in computing) Approval is needed to confirm you are a woman involved in computing though. A lot of traffic from this list, so filter into a folder to review each week.
- Students – ask professors for contacts

**Follow-up:**

Always say that you will thank the funder in your program (ex. at the end of a PowerPoint). Also, send a follow-up thank you to each with photos of participants enjoying swag or program in general saying how much students enjoyed it.