

University of Louisiana at Lafayette RecSports
Club Sports Sponsorship Guide



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Club Sports at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Welcome to the Club Sports Sponsorship Guide for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette RecSports! The University of Louisiana at Lafayette RecSports is located at the Bourgeois Hall Student Recreation Center in Room 118. The mission of UL Rec Sports is to provide innovative and exceptional programs, services, and facilities to our diverse University community. They are committed to empowering our students to engage in an active and healthy lifestyle that enhances their college experience and promotes lifelong wellness. With this in mind, the RecSports department created Club Sports in order to promote a competitive, non-varsity, atmosphere for the student body. Club Sports have the ability to use Bourgeois Hall facilities and all fields at Bourgeois Park across the street. With the addition of new turf and grass fields on Coliseum road, club sports will have the ability to play true “home” games on campus. Currently, RecSports has the following active clubs: Bowling, Climbing, Cycling, Ice Hockey, Judo, Karate, Men’s Lacrosse, Power Lifting, Men’s Rugby, Skateboarding, Men’s Soccer, Sport Shooting, Swim, Tae Kwon Do, Triathlon, Ultimate Frisbee, Wakeboarding and Waterski.

Here in this guide, we will explain the importance of fundraising for your club and what options you have in terms of raising funds. This process is essentially a reward system. Based on your club’s previous fundraising history, you have already been categorized into one of our three tiers. These tiers will dictate the amount of money your club will be allowed to receive based on how much money you have raised!

What is fundraising and how do you do it?

Fundraising is the very base of your club sport. Essentially, fundraising is obtaining money through events, donations or sponsorships. This money raised is for the purpose of bettering the club sport. This could range from buying equipment to paying to go to the national tournament. Remember, the more you raise, the more we can help pay for these things as well!

- **Donations**

Donations are funds that are acquired from businesses, family, friends or any supporter of your organization for nothing in return. For example, the UL Lafayette Shotgun Team may go to Lafayette Shooter’s Club and ask for their support in the upcoming season with a donation. Due to a common interest, the Lafayette Shooter’s Club may want to support this club in order to promote and encourage the interest of this particular organization. There are benefits for a business to give a donation to your club. Donations that are written out to the UL Club Sports Foundation Account are tax deductible. This can be very attractive to potential donators and the money is still accessible to your club!

- **Sponsorships**

The next way to seek funds is through sponsorships. A sponsorship can be defined as support of a company or organization with products, finances or services in return. Organizations typically look at these as advertisement opportunities. The goal of their organization to grow and build brand recognition, and club sports can help them achieve that! The key to sponsorships is to find a partner who will help benefit the club, while still gaining something in return.

Guidelines to Sponsorships

One thing to consider when looking for sponsorships is that you and your club are representing the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and the RecSports department. Therefore, there are certain rules and regulations that must be adhered to when looking for sponsorships. The following are steps that must be followed in order to have fully approved and appropriate sponsorships with businesses.

1. Before starting any talks with businesses, talk to David or Jordan (see footnote) to see if your list of potential businesses are appropriate to work with. We will then review the companies and ensure they are a good fit for a RecSports Club Sport sponsorship.
 2. Once approved, discuss with David or Jordan the services you intend to offer to the company in return for their funding and/or products. Remember all marketing and advertisement done at Bourgeois Hall must be approved by the RecSports Director first. Any advertisement or paperwork posted without approval will be removed and disposed of.
 3. After potential services have been approved, bring a copy of the letter you plan on giving the potential sponsor to the RecSports Office. David, Jordan or any other RecSports staff will review the letter and make sure it is appropriate and allows your club the best chance at achieving a sponsorship.
 4. Alert RecSports with the details of the potential sponsorship. While the sponsorship is between the club and the company, the club is still a representation of our department and must work in conjunction with RecSports. Inform RecSports of any details that are not fully in the clubs hands, such as posting a banner in the Rec.
 5. If the details of the sponsorship are not approved by RecSports, then the club will be forced to concede on their end of the deal. It is better to be too descriptive and ask many questions, than to not ask enough questions and be wrong.
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Creating a Sponsorship Letter

When looking for sponsorships it is important to have a letter that is personal, direct, short and clear. You are looking to create a partnership and in every good partnership, there are benefits and sacrifices. Know that this letter is a suggestion and starting point for negotiations. While every letter will be different, there are key attributes that need to be highlighted in order to create an effective partnership. They are as follows:

1. On letterhead paper, address the potential sponsor by their full company name.
2. Tell them who you are. Briefly describe the club and the club's goals.
3. Address the need for a sponsor and why you believe their company is the perfect fit for your club and their needs.
4. Suggest potential sponsorship opportunities that may be appealing to the company, but mention how you are open to discussing other opportunities as well.
5. Sign and give your contact information. The more options of contact you give a company, the more likely they are to respond faster.

An example of a letter to the potential sponsor can be found at the end of this guide.

Make the Meeting

Once you have completed the letter, your next goal is to schedule a face to face or video chat meeting with the company. For your convenience, RecSports will allow you to use our conference room in Bourgeois Hall at the RecSports Office (Room 118) with a weeks prior notice. It is very common to have letters and emails misconstrue the true meaning of the writers intent is. Having a face to face, video chat or even telephone call can help correct any error in transferring information. If a company is planning on giving you money, they will want to know exactly what they need to do, what you are going to do and what exactly they are paying for.

Another way clubs can potentially sway on the fence sponsors is by inviting them out to a competition or practice. When a representative is watching the club in action, they will be able to assess how serious the organization is and see exactly what they are supporting. This is two-fold, so be sure to have all club members act responsibly when potential sponsors are attending.

Continuing Relationships

Just because you landed the sponsorship does not mean you are done. Like all relationships, there needs to be invested interest well beyond simply having a logo on your jersey or t-shirt. Be sure to contact the sponsor frequently. Ask if there is anything else they would like to work with as the season goes on. Ask if they are satisfied with the current deal and if not, how to fix it. When finding sponsors it is preferred to have them be continued partners in the future as well. With the proper advertising and benefits, a sponsor may find this deal strong enough to continue for years to come. You are preparing not only for the present club, but the future of the club as well. Be sure to thank your sponsors every season. A simple handwritten "Thank you for your support of the _____ club. Sincerely, John Smith" is good enough. These little bits of initiative will help set up the club financially for years to come.

Types of Sponsorship

The beauty of sponsorships is that they are agreements that could potentially fit any business. While it is very important to stress exactly what you want when looking for sponsorships, flexibility and creativity are the cornerstones for finding and producing healthy and productive sponsorships. Below are a few of the most popular forms of sponsorships.

1. **Money Sponsorship** – While this seems like a no brainer, it is very rare that a company will enter into a cash sponsorship agreement when they could just as easily donate the money and get a tax write off. With that being said, the ease of just writing a check or donating cash does have its upside.
 2. **Gift-In-Kind Sponsorship** – This type of sponsorship has the potential to be extremely useful for both the club and the business. Gift sponsorships are anything that the club will need to purchase, that the business will purchase for them. These typically allow a business to advertise on apparel or equipment. The more equipment or apparel the club receives in sponsorships, the less the club will need to spend out of its own account.
 3. **Portion of the Proceeds Night** – This is a fairly fun one. A lot of restaurants will enter into an agreement with a club, where for a couple of hours a night, part of the proceeds will be awarded to the club! At this point it is all up to the club to promote the night to help the restaurant and club make as much money as possible.
 4. **Travel Sponsorships** – For teams that travel a lot and have competition coming to Lafayette frequently, creating a partnership with a local hotel or bus service can have great value. Group discounts and potential monetary compensation are not uncommon to see in these sort of deals.
 5. **Event Sponsorships** – Are you hosting a tournament this season? Will you have a merchandise booth? Is there any hospitality tent or service tent that will be up at every home game? These are potential opportunities! Reach out to companies and ask if they would like to sponsor the home tournament,
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merchandise booth, etc. This is sometimes as simple as putting their company's name on fliers or maybe even hanging up a sign by the entrance of the event. These opportunities have the potential to raise significant funds.

Sponsorships Benefits by Levels

A great way to have sponsorships organized is to create a sponsorship level system. Similar to the olympic medal system, you can have bronze, silver and gold sponsorship levels. With each increase in level, the price will rise as well as the amount of benefits available to the potential sponsor. This is a great way to show the sponsor that your club has a plan and multiple levels of benefits available to them. Below is a great example with real opportunities your club has the potential to offer.

Sponsorship Level	Amount	Benefits
Bronze	\$500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisement Poster (24x36 in) in Bourgeois Hall for 1 month • Advertisement in Game Day program
Silver	\$1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bronze Level benefits + • Practice T-Shirt Sponsor
Gold	\$2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silver Level benefits + • Tournament Sponsor • Uniform Sponsor

Appendix

The following is an example of an invitation letter to a sponsor. Remember every letter should be personalized and unique to the individual company. Use this purely as a guide. While there will be more information needed than in this example, remember to at the very least include the items listed in the “Creating a Sponsorship Letter” section.

Date

Dear (Full Company Name),

The ____ Club at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is currently seeking sponsorships for the upcoming season! We believe that your company is a great fit with our club. Due to our common interest in _____, we see a multitude of options where we can promote your product/service to the student body, faculty and staff, as well as on a national scale! Our team is in the ____ year of existence and has a strong tie with that (insert sport) community. Our club is founded on the beliefs that hard work and dedication can help spread awareness of our team with our ultimate goal of becoming _____ champions. We want you to be a part of this journey. Some options we have at sponsorships are, but not limited to:

- Tournament Sponsors (\$1000)
- Uniform Sponsor (\$1500)
- Practice/Fan T-shirt Sponsors (\$500)

We thank you so much for taking time to look at our offers and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

(Signature Here)

John Smith, Club President

jsmith1234@louisiana.edu

337.123.4567

Once the letter has been received and agreed upon by the sponsor it is important to have an agreement form. This form locks the sponsor and club into a contractual bond. Documentation can help both parties feel secure about their agreed upon sponsorship. The following is an example of a sponsorship agreement letter form.

Sponsorship Agreement Form	
_____ Club at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette	
Organization's Contact Information	
Company _____	
Contact Name _____	Position _____
Address _____	
City _____	State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____	Email _____
Sponsorship Level	
Bronze _____	
Silver _____	
Gold _____	
Additional items or services offered:	

For additional information contact David Jamie at 337.482.6989 or via email at davidj@louisiana.edu.	
Sponsor Signature: _____	Date: _____

Further Questions

If you have any further questions or comments feel free to contact David Jamie or stop by the RecSports Office at 225 Cajundome Blvd
Lafayette, LA 70504 Room 118. Good luck this season and "Geaux Cajuns!"